



Read to Me News

From Your Library & Idaho's Read to Me Program

Print Awareness & Young Children

Being familiar with printed language helps children feel comfortable with books and understand that print is useful.

To help develop print awareness:

- Show children that print is all around them. Point it out in signs, on menus, and in books and newspapers.
- Occasionally run your finger along the bottom of words while reading. This helps children understand that print runs from left to right and that you are reading text rather than looking at pictures.
- Point to some words as you say them, especially words that are repeated. Label objects in your home.
- Let your child turn the pages. When you're done reading, let him or her hold the book and tell you the story.
- Talk about and play with punctuation marks. Show them what an exclamation mark is and what a question mark is and why you read those sentences differently.
- Encourage children to play with print every day. Help them make lists, write notes, make signs, etc.

Children with print awareness understand that print has different functions; for example, menus list food choices, a book tells a story, a sign can show a favorite restaurant, or warn of danger.

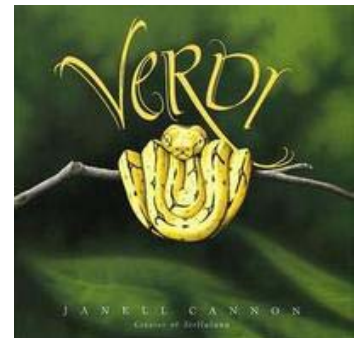
Book of the Month

Stellaluna by
Janell Cannon

After she falls head first into a bird's nest, a baby bat is raised like a bird until she is reunited with her mother.

If you liked *Stellaluna*, you might enjoy some of these other titles by Janell Cannon. In an interview with Harcourt Publishing, she was asked about her gift for "making the most creepy and unappreciated creatures endearing." She said, "I tend to root for the underdog, and so when an animal is generally misunderstood and unpopular with humans, I question how this bad rep has developed. All forms of life are connected and are important in ways that we often overlook, and I try to show loathed creatures in a new light by digging up information about their ecological significance and choosing species that I think people will find most attractive. The Gambian epauletted fruit bat has a friendly face with doglike qualities, and I chose it to be the star of my book *Stellaluna*."

Other books by Janell Cannon include *Verdi*, *Crickwing*, *Little You*, *Pinduli*, and *Trupp*. Look for them at your public library!



More fun with *Stellaluna*

Rhyme Time: How many words can you and your child rhyme with bat? Make up a poem with some of these words. Show your child how the ending of these words stays the same and the first letter changes the word.

Book Talk: Before reading *Stellaluna*, ask your child if he or she has ever seen a bat. What was it like? Other conversation starters are: Do you have any friends that are different from you in some way? How are you alike? How do you think *Stellaluna* felt when she fell in to the nest? How about when she found her mother?

Bat Facts: Be sure to read the "Bat Notes" at the end of *Stellaluna*. Did you know that there are no vampire bats in the United States? There are about 15 species of bats in the Pacific Northwest. All Idaho bats feed on insects. A single little brown bat can catch more than 1,200 insects in one hour! In winter insects become very scarce, so our bats must either migrate to a warm region or hibernate. Ask your librarian for a nonfiction book about bats for more bat facts!

Bat Songs!

Flutter Flutter Little Bat

(Sung to the tune of *Twinkle Twinkle*)

Flutter flutter little bat,
How I wonder where you're at.
Up above the midnight sky,
Peeking out with yellow eyes.
Flutter flutter little bat,
How I wonder where you're at.



Black Bat, Black Bat

(Have your child pretend to be a bat and do what the chant says.)

Black bat, black bat fly around.
Black bat, black bat fly to the ground.
Black bat, black bat, fly up high.
Black bat, black bat, fly in the sky.
Black bat, black bat, fly down low.
Black bat, black bat fly just so!

Bat Poem

Author Unknown

A bat can hang upside down

It holds on with its toes.

When it wants to find some food

It spreads its wings and goes.

A bat might live inside a cave

And fly around at night.

And when it's dark a bat knows how

to get around all right.



Parent Guidelines for Building Self-Esteem Through Literacy

Spend quality time together.
Encourage your child to read for fun.
Listen carefully to your child's ideas.
Find ways to encourage your child's efforts.

Enjoy family activities and projects.
Share favorite books and stories.
Talk to your child often.
Establish a daily read-aloud time.
Engage your child in fun reading activities.
Model the act of reading for your child.

Visit your library today!